

There is an interesting classification of occupational dermatitis which will be of value in the early diagnosis of these conditions and should minimize chronic allergic states and shorten the period of incapacity. The relation of this condition to subsequent eczematoid reactions due to other causes is stressed.

Seborrhœic states are also clearly described, but the importance of acidosis and high carbohydrate diets are not adequately stressed, while the psychological factors associated with these problems might have had greater consideration.

The treatment advocated for psoriasis is rather drastic. Chrysarobin is less favoured in modern therapy than the text suggests, and a warning about the dangers of prolonged arsenical medication is omitted.

It would be fairer to warn against prolonged medication with sulphonamides and penicillin in the treatment of impetigo than to say that it is not justifiable to use them for treatment when other effective remedies are available.

In the section dealing with ringworm of the scalp no mention is made of the penetrating bases, such as carbol wax 1500; nor are the newer fatty acid derivatives mentioned in the treatment of other fungus infections.

In an excellent chapter on birthmarks, detailed treatment of strawberry nævi should have included reference to the spontaneous disappearance of many of these marks without treatment and with a correspondingly lessened risk of permanent disfiguring scars. The advice to leave pigmented moles untreated in childhood, though the risk of malignancy from trauma in adult life is admitted, is unacceptable.

Finally there is a long list of the common sensitizing compounds capable of causing dermatitis, with the appropriate concentration and vehicles used for patch testing; this valuable table will probably be of little help to the harassed practitioner for whom the book is really intended, but it is nevertheless a useful addition to the book.

Beyond these minor criticisms, the book is excellent. It gives in an easy and readable style just the amount of information which will help the practitioner to solve many of his difficulties with skin cases. It could do much to overcome the indifference which has for so long been responsible for the plight of the unfortunate and sometimes neglected patient with skin disease.

D. E.

Aids to the Nursing of Venereal Diseases. By E. M. Ryle-Horwood, S.R.N. 1949. London: Baillière, Tindall, and Cox. Pp. 132. 35 illustrations. Price 5s.

Sooner or later during training every nurse in a medical ward meets with a case of venereal disease, often one that is already far advanced, or perhaps an expectant mother with the disease in its latent stage; or she may come across a case of early venereal disease in a casualty department. Although some knowledge is thus gained, the nurse in training has little opportunity of acquiring a comprehensive picture of the natural course of these

diseases unless she spends part of her training working in a venereal disease clinic. Medical textbooks are usually far too full of detail to be of value, and they contain little or no instruction about nursing.

This small volume contains an admirable short account of the course, methods of investigation, and modern treatment of these diseases. Constructed from the daily work of a busy venereal disease clinic, it approaches the problems involved from a practical and instructive angle which includes the medical, nursing, social, public health, and confidential aspects. The work is clear and concise, well balanced, and notably free from errors. There is some confusion in the description of congenital syphilis, where the paragraph outlining the late manifestations is sub-titled "Early Congenital Syphilis" and a description of the early lesions is missing.

The book can safely be recommended as being accurate and helpful to the nurse in training. It is written, however, almost exclusively from the point of view of and for the benefit of the female nurse; and to render it of equal value to the male nurse some details of the procedure of urethral irrigation, preparation for urethroscopy, care and maintenance of urethral bougies, and the local treatment of such conditions as balanitis, soft sore, bubo, epididymitis, and prostatitis might be included.

V. E. L.

The Shadow on the Path. By George Bankoff, M.D., F.R.C.S. 1949. London: Peter Garnett. Pp. 205. Price 12s. 6d.

The reader is introduced to an imaginary venereologist who recounts a series of case histories to illustrate various aspects of gonorrhœa and syphilis. In the final chapter the general problem of the venereal diseases is considered and notification and compulsory treatment of all cases, together with factual education of the public at large, are advocated as the solution. It is fortunate that the venereologist is fictitious, as his technical knowledge leaves much to be desired. He leans heavily on the results of laboratory tests and has a touching faith in the power of penicillin to work miracles. The case histories are told dramatically and literary licence frequently distorts factual accuracy. Space does not permit a catalogue of the many technical errors, but few if any venereologists will agree with the remarks to be found on pages 56 (lines 25 to 28), 73 (lines 20 to 24), 80, 81 (lines 2 to 5), 94 (lines 9 and 10), 184 (lines 20 to 22). Serious typographical errors occur on pages 95 and 107. In the chapters entitled "Father and Son" and "Phyllis," technical inaccuracies and confused medical thought are especially prominent. The serious technical errors make this book unsuitable for medical students (to whom the author hopes it will be useful); and the lay reader, whilst perhaps enjoying the dramatic story, must seek elsewhere for sound factual knowledge of the venereal diseases.

S. M. L.

Owing to the steadily increasing cost of production, it has been found necessary to raise the price of the *British Journal of Venereal Diseases*, beginning with the first issue of 1950. The yearly subscription will then be 30s. (U.S.A. \$5). Single copies remain at 7s. 6d. each.